

SPEECH OF HON. CHARLES A. WILSON OF OHIO IN THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

Madame Speaker, last week the House and the Senate passed a bill ensuring that 10 million low-income children have access to the quality health care coverage that they need to live healthy and productive lives.

Democrats and Republicans worked together to what was right for our nation's children. The bipartisan agreement will strengthen the CHIP program over the next five years by ensuring that an additional four million low-income children receive access to the health care coverage they desperately need. This is not an expansion of the program. Each of these kids is already eligible for the program, but under the current authorization there simply is not enough money to cover more eligible children.

At a time when the number of uninsured children is increasing, we need to be doing more to ensure that they have access to quality care, and that's what this bipartisan agreement does.

Despite strong bipartisan support here in congress, President Bush is threatening to veto the bill. Instead, he favors a plan that would take health care coverage away from nearly a million children who are already enrolled in the CHIP program. The president's plan is unacceptable. He should reconsider his veto threat and support our bipartisan legislation.